

# DHSS Seeks Back-to-School Donations for Adopt-A-Student Program

NEW CASTLE (Aug. 7, 2019) – With back-to-school shopping already well under way for Delaware families, the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) asks you to considering helping students in need get off to a good start this school year by participating in the annual Adopt-A-Student program.

DHSS, in partnership with the Human Services Council, Inc., is seeking individuals, businesses and organizations to help thousands of children living in poverty or in low-income households by providing much needed backpacks, school supplies, and gift cards to purchase uniforms, or by choosing items to purchase for students via an online donation portal. The deadline for donations is Aug. 12 for online purchases and Aug. 19 for donations dropped off at Adopt-A-Student office locations.

“The work done by the Adopt-A-Student program – thanks to the generosity of sponsors and donors – helps make sure all Delaware children are ready to start learning on the first day of school,” DHSS Secretary Dr. Kara Odom Walker said. “I urge Delawareans to donate to Adopt-A-Student so our most vulnerable students are ready to take that next step toward success.”

Designed to encourage a positive attitude toward school by helping with the supplies that students need to achieve success, Adopt-A-Student accepts backpacks and school supply donations, as well as \$50 gift cards to retail stores that carry school uniforms such as Rainbow and Walmart. In addition, merchant credit gift cards (\$30) are recommended from Forman Mills.

“We are excited about the impact we can make in the lives of children in Delaware,” said Lisa MB Johnson, Program Administrator for the Adopt-A-Family program in DHSS’ Division of State Service Centers. “We truly appreciate the support we receive from the community for this annual program.”

From 2016 through 2018, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, about 15 percent of Delawareans lived below the poverty line. To “adopt” a student or make a donation, please contact the closest Adopt-A-Family office:

**New Castle County:** Contact the Adopt-A-Student program at 302-792-6510 or email [sharon.brown@delaware.gov](mailto:sharon.brown@delaware.gov). Donation hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Online donations for New Castle County: <https://www.roonga.com/aas2019newcastle>

**Kent and Sussex counties:** Contact the Adopt-A-Student program at 302-424-7260 or email [elizabeth.senato@delaware.gov](mailto:elizabeth.senato@delaware.gov). Donation hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Online donations for Kent County: <https://www.roonga.com/aas2019kent>  
Online donations for Sussex County: <https://www.roonga.com/aas2019sussex>

Any donor who needs to drop off donations outside of regular offices hours may call either office for an accommodation. More information can be found at: [www.adoptafamilyde.org](http://www.adoptafamilyde.org).

In 2018, the Adopt-A-Student program, through the leadership of the Human Services Councils, Inc., helped more than 900 Delaware students referred to the program by schools and social service agencies. Year-round, the various Adopt-A-Family programs aid families in crisis – those struggling with illness, homelessness, domestic violence, poverty or unemployment. The program, begun in 1973, is coordinated by the Division of State Service Centers in all three counties.

For these programs, Adopt-A-Family accepts financial and in-

kind donations. All donations are tax deductible (Federal Tax ID# 51-0292966). Checks can be made payable to: Adopt-A-Family, and mailed to either 3301 Green St., Claymont, DE 19703; or 13 SW Front St., Milford, DE 19963.

For more information about Adopt-A-Family, go to [www.adoptafamilyde.org/](http://www.adoptafamilyde.org/) or contact your nearest state service center.

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*The Department of Health and Social Services is committed to improving the quality of life of Delaware's citizens by promoting health and well-being, fostering self-sufficiency, and protecting vulnerable populations.*